

Dorney Parish in 2011: A Year of Anticipation and Community Engagement

The year 2011 in Dorney Parish was characterised by a sense of anticipation as the village prepared for the 2012 London Olympics, set to be held at Dorney Lake. Alongside the Olympic buzz, the *Dorney Parish News* reveals a community actively engaged in local issues, striving to improve facilities, and celebrating its unique heritage.

Dorney Lake and the Olympics: Preparations and Concerns

- **Heightened Awareness of Dorney Lake:** The impending Olympics brought Dorney Lake into sharp focus, both locally and nationally. The sources document the transformation of the lake into a world-class rowing venue and the accompanying infrastructure developments, such as new bridges and enhanced security measures.
- **Traffic and Access Worries:** Residents voiced concerns about the potential impact of the Olympics on traffic flow and access to the village, especially during the Games themselves. Discussions about traffic management plans, parking restrictions, and potential disruption to daily life were prominent.
- **The Search for a Lasting Legacy:** The Parish Council and community groups actively sought to ensure that the Olympics would leave a positive legacy for Dorney. This included advocating for improvements to broadband infrastructure and exploring ways to commemorate the village's role as an Olympic host.

Community Life: A Vibrant Tapestry

- **Dorney & District Horticultural Society (DDHS):** The DDHS continued to flourish, organising a range of events, including the Annual Horticultural Show, garden visits, and talks by guest speakers. The society's activities contributed to Dorney's success in the Buckinghamshire Best Kept Village competition, where it received a Certificate of Merit.
- **Dorney Players: A Theatrical Revival:** After a period of inactivity, the Dorney Players, the village's amateur dramatic group, saw a revival in the 1980s. Con Williamson's letter to the *Parish News* in 1973, republished in 2011, served as a reminder of the group's history and a call for renewed enthusiasm.
- **Fundraising for the Village Hall:** The Dorney Village Hall Management Committee (DVHMC) began planning for the much-needed refurbishment of the Village Hall. Fundraising efforts were initiated to support the project.

Key Issues and Developments

- **Broadband Frustrations:** Residents expressed ongoing frustration with the slow broadband speeds in Dorney, highlighting the need for improvements to keep pace with the digital age.
- **Traffic and Parking Challenges:** The sources document recurring concerns about traffic congestion and inconsiderate parking throughout the parish, particularly on roads leading to Dorney Lake and around Dorney Reach School.
- **Community Policing and Safety:** The Neighbourhood Policing Team provided updates on crime prevention and community safety initiatives. Their presence at local events, such as the Dorney Court Kitchen Garden's open day, contributed to a sense of security.

Notable Events in 2011

- **Royal Wedding Celebrations:** The village came together to celebrate the Royal Wedding of Prince William and Catherine Middleton with a street party. The event, organised by a committee led by Leanne Kittel, brought residents together and fostered a sense of community pride.
- **World Rowing Junior Championships:** Dorney Lake hosted the World Rowing Junior Championships in August 2011. This event served as a test run for the 2012 Olympics, providing an opportunity to assess traffic management plans and security arrangements.
- **Dorney Fete:** The annual Dorney Fete was held in September, offering a range of attractions, including a performance by the Kondini Act, horse-drawn cart rides, and family-friendly activities. The event was a popular gathering for residents and visitors alike.

The *Dorney Parish News*: A Community Forum

The *Dorney Parish News* played a vital role in keeping residents informed about local events, issues, and opinions. The magazine provided a platform for community announcements, reports from Parish Council meetings, and thought-provoking articles and letters to the editor, reflecting the diverse perspectives within Dorney Parish.

2011 marked a year of anticipation and preparation for Dorney Parish. As the Olympics loomed on the horizon, the community grappled with the potential challenges and opportunities that the Games would bring. Alongside these preparations, Dorney residents continued to engage in a range of activities that fostered community spirit, celebrated local traditions, and shaped the unique character of their village.